A JEWELL For the EARE.

By Robert Wilkinson.

ROM. 10. 17.
Faith cometh by Hearing, and Hearing by the Word of God.

LONDON:
Printed for *John Stafford*, and are to to be sold at his house in Black-horse-Alley, *Fleet Street*. 1643.

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BRITISH MUSEUM

To the Reader.

WIlling to ſatisfie the eſpecial entreaty of ſome, and for a generall benefit to all Gods Church, I have ſet out to publike view this Sermon of preparative, which I preached in my pariſh Church at *Horton* in *Kent*. I know there is no word of God but hath his profit, for ſo ſaith *Paul*, that all Scripture is profitable: But ſet this art of hearing aſide, and all will be unprofitable. The ſicke man on whom our Saviour wrought the miracle though he lay even by the poole of *Bethesday*, the water whereof had a ſpeciall vertue to cure all diſeaſes, yet in 38. yeers could not be cured: and the reaſon was, becauſe he could neither of himſelfe ſtep in, neither was there any to dip him in, when the Angel came downe to ſtir the water. This is the reaſon why we have ſo many unfruitfull hearers at this day, that albeit mens ſoules are even ſicke for want of knowledge, though they have lien at the well-head and by the water of life, and had a continuall ſound of the Goſpell in their eare, yet in 50. yeeres this ignorance can-

2 Tim. 3 6

Iohn 5.

not be expelled, becauſe when that Angel of Gods will doth preach the Word, and ſtir up the water of life, they know not how to move their eares towards it. This therefoie (beloved) I have ſet downe as a direction to teach men how to heare: therefore learne this Sermon, and profit by all; neglect this, and loſe it. I have called it a Jewell, as Chriſt called the Goſpell a Pearle: for without this Jewell, you ſhall never finde that pearle. I have fitted it for Eare, unto which if ye apply it, it ſhall be an ornament to the eare, as *Salomon* ſaid of Wiſedome, it would be as a chaine to thy necke; therefore faile not but apply it. He which ſuffered the Jewes to rob the Egyptians of their jewels, and when they after melted them to make a Calfe, did ſuffer us to rob them of their ſpirituall jewell: Let us take heed, leſt for our abuſe of the Word he ſtir up the Jews againe to rob us of this Pearle of the Goſpell, and cauſe them to riſe againe by our fall, as we have riſen by theirs. God of his mercy turn our hearts, and teach us to embrace his Word as we ought. Amen.

Mat. 13. 44

Prov. 1. 9.

Yours in Chriſt, Ro. Wilkinſon.

frances wolferston her book

A JEWELL
For the
EARE.

MAT. 13.7.

He that hath eares to heare, let him heare.

BEcause (Beloved) the hearing of the Word is so holy a thing, and holy things are not rashly to be attempted, I have thought good in this my entrance to lay downe a preparative, that we may know with what reverence we are to come into the Temple, with what attention to heare, desire to learne, and care to practise. For well I remember, that when the Israelites were summoned to appeare before the Lord in Sinai, they were first comanded to sanctifie Exod. 19. 10.11.

their hearts and wash their cloathes, even
Exod. 3. 5. as Moses might not come neare the Angell till he had put off his shooes, because the ground was holy whereon he stood: this reason as neerly toucheth us, for if the place be as holy, the exercise as holy now as then, why should not we come as prepared as they? lest coming with uncircumcised eares, and unprepared hearts, it be said by us, as by him that intruded himselfe at the wedding; Friend, how
Mat. 22. 12 camest thou hither, not having on a wedding garment? In my first Sermon upon these words of the Prophet, For Sions
Esay 62. 1 sake I will not hold my tongue: I let you know what was the duty of the speaker: now it commeth in good order to tell you the duty of the Hearer. For if it could any way concerne you to know our duty, much more available will it be to learne your owne: for a declaration whereof I have chosen this Text, He that hath eares to heare, let him heare. I know we are all by nature curious, and every mans nature is to regard another mans duty before his owne, even as Peter said to Christ, Master, What shall John doe? To whom Christ roundly answered a-

gaine, What is that to thee? as if he meant, that every man should look to himselfe, and let John alone. So would I perswade you (for that yee are hearers) to learne the hearers duty, and let the speaker alone: for albeit there be such a reference between hearing and speaking, as they may not well be severed, yet the necessity of hearing doth more generally concerne all, for God said, O earth, earth, earth, heare the Word of the Lord, but he never said, O earth, earth, earth, preach the Word of the Lord. For Aarons robe befits not every man upon the earth, but every man is bound to weare this Jewell at his eare, for Faith commeth by hearing; as if Saint Paul had said, where there is no hearing, there can be no faith: therefore Abraham spake out of Heaven, and his voyce did pierce even the bowels of Hell, They have Moses and the Prophets, let them hear them: and when he saith, let them, it is more then a bare toleration: as to say, they may if they will: for it is a flat charge, because God therefore sent Moses and the Prophets into the World, the world of necessity should hear. There is a kind of people that thinke the whole bur-

Ioh. 32. 15

Ier. 22. 12.

Rom. 10. 19

Luk. 16. 20

then

then of the Sabbath to lye vpon the speaker: therfore Christ to weed out that fancy, saith likewise, Take heed how you hear: to shew that there is a necessity and and art of hearing, as wel as of speaking. These two are fitly compared to a Locke an a Key: for as the Key openeth the Locke, and maketh entrance in at the doore, so the tongue of the Minister should open the eare of the hearer, that the Spirit of knowledg and understanding might passe into the heart: and so it should seem that speaking is ordained to hearing, as the meanes is directed to the end: for when GOD had commanded that the skirts of Aarons robe should bee hung about with Pomegranets of silke, and an entercourse of Bels betweene them, the reason was added, That so oft as he ministred in the holy Place, and went in and out before the Lord, his sound should bee heard: but walls and windowes cannot heare, therefore by all likelihood that Doctrine was intended for men: and if for men, why not for you? The Holy Ghost descended vpon the Apostles, not in the shapes of heads that they should onely vnderstand the word; nor of hearts, that they

they should onely love the Lord, but like tongues, that they should preach the word: so that when God sent out his Disciples with tongues, his meaning was, that yee should meet them in the halfe way with eares. And so ye see the correspondence between these two Scriptures, how justly they sit and jumpe together. For Sions sake I will not hold my tongue. He that hath eares to heare, let him heare. For if it be necessary that we should preach for Sions sake, then it is requisite that Sion shold heare for her owne sake.

This saying of our Saviour, Hee that hath eares, &c. is the argument, by which he doth begge attention for the Parable of the Sower; to shew, that the Doctrine it contained, was both so excellent in it self, and so necessary for the world, as if a man were worth but his eares, hee could not chuse but heare, and it may concerne either all in generall, because all have eares, or the Elect particularly, because they only have eares to heare. For the former, if there were no further reason why men should heare but this, because God hath given an eare, yet it bindeth very strongly: therefore see how God speaketh unto

us, even in the fleshly instrument of hearing. Christ doth not urge upon us the dignity of himselfe the speaker, neither the necessity of the Doctrine, nor the misery which befalleth to man, by not hearing: but leaving all those arguments, he reasoned against us, even from flesh and blood, and proveth even by the member and instrument of the eare, that men ought to be hearers of the Word. We must not thinke our eares are given us for worldly uses onely, to harken after our profit, to listen to him that can teach us a Gospell of gold, that can tickle our eares with musicke, or our minds with unhoneſt mirth: but God hath planted the eares for spirituall uses, even as Saint John saith, Let him that hath an eare, heare what the Spirit saith. Marke well the words, for that we should mark them, he hath seven times repeated them, Let him that hath an eare, heare, not what the world saith, nor what the flesh saith, nor what the Divell saith: but what the Spirit saith: that if both speak at once, we would listen to the Spirit, and turne the deafe side to the divell: and if the ear be the dore of the heart, then fitly might David say, Lift up your heads

Apoc. 2. 3.

Psal. 24 9.

ye

ye gates, and be you open you everlasting doores: and not every guest, but the King of glory shall come in. And what marvell is it, if the eares were consecrated to holy uses, since there is no part or member of the body or soule, which God hath not ordained to some spirituall end. Did God create the eye that it should onely be a light to the body, & in no sort give light to the soule? Or did he not rather principally create it, that it might tell the soul what beauty was in the visible Creatures that the soule might thereby conjecture what glory is in the invisible God? Did God give man a mouth onely to bargaine and buy withall, or call for the necessities of this life, or rather to sing of his testimonies, and set forth his praises: O God my heart is prepared (saith David) and so is my tongue; and then he presently inferreth upon it, I will sing and give praise: for what should he do with a tongu that giveth not praise? God hath given us wit and braines, but not onely for worldly uses and devises, not to invent instruments of musicke, as Jubal did, nor workes of brasse, as Tubal Cain did, nor to understand policies, as Achito-

phel

phel did, but to ſtudy for heavenly wiſedome, as Salomon did, to meditate of Gods lawes, as David did; God hath given us hearts and affections, and yet not to love the world, but to ſet our affections wholly on him. In a word, there is no part or member in ſoule and body, which ought not as a Nazarite, to be conſecrated and vowed to the ſervice of God. Salomon judged thoſe dayes to bee evill dayes, wherein a man could not uſe his members to remember the Creatour, wherein the keepers ſhould tremble, the ſtrong men ſhould bow, they that looked out at the windowes ſhould ware darke, wherein the doores ſhould be ſhut up by the baſe ſound of the grinding, and the daughters of ſinging ſhould be abaſed: thoſe hee judged evil dayes, as if it were as good in a manner to have no hands, as ſuch trembling hands: to have no legges, as ſuch feeble joynts; to have no eyes, as blind eyes; to be without an eare, as to have a deafe eare. Then by the contrary, if theſe be evill dayes, wherein a man cannot uſe his members, they muſt needs be good wherein God hath given a free uſe of all. So that it may ſeeme that GOD in each

part

part or member of a mans body, did intend some speciall use for his worship and service, vnto which if the parts in youth were not imployed, in the evill dayes they would prove fruitlesse and vnprofitable. Will those eyes which were wont to wander and gaze after every vanity, will they in the evil dayes be learned and taught to behold Gods will in his precious word, and his great glory in all his Creatures. Will the tongu which ever hath been accustomed & inured with all vices as lying slandering scurrilitie and blasphemy, will it in the evil dayes be taught to sound out the praise of God. Wil those eares which have been so accustomed to filth and folly, will they in the evill dayes bee taught to hear the word of God. therefore while we have eyes let vs behold, and he that hath eares let him heare. It is not onely a bare gift of nature, or worke of the womb, that we have eyes, eares and tongues, but it is even the grace of GOD from above, for in him we live, wee move, and have our being, and God bestoweth not his graces for nothing: I say there is no member of mans body, but carrieth in it a print of Gods love, and testimony of his grace;

but

but above all the reſt, more eſpecially are we beholding to him for our eyes & eares, for that by theſe two, as by a channell, the knowledge of God is conveyed into our ſoules, for by the eye we come to the naturall mans Divinity in ſurvaying the Creatures, becauſe as Paul ſaith, the viſible things of God, that is, his eternall Power, and God-head are ſeene by the Creation of the world; if they were ſeene by the creation, then our eye is the ſchoolmaſter to bring us to the knowledge of the Creature, but that knowledge is unperfect, as the glimmering of a light; but by our eares more ſpecially and expreſſly we attaine to the knowledge of Gods revealed will: ſo that God never cometh ſo neere a mans ſoule as when he entreth in by the doore of his eare: therefore the eare is a moſt precious member, if men knew how to uſe it, and better were it to loſe a better member than to want it: if a man loſe an eye, an arme, or a leg, he judgeth of himſelfe as of a cripple, unworthy to live among men, and fit for no place but for a ſpittle; and yet theſe are but maimes in the body: but if God take away the uſe of hearing, it is a ſigne he is angry indeed

deed, and therefore a famine to the soul, for the soul feedeth at the ear, as the body by the mouth, therefore better lose all than lose it. Our Saviour Christ said, If thy right eye cause thee to offend, pluck it out, if thy right hand cause thee to offend, cut it off; but he never said, if thine ear offend thee, stop it up, there is a greater use of it than of hands or eyes: for a man may want his hands and have faith, or his eyes and have faith, but hardly can he want his ears and have faith: for faith commeth by hearing, not by seeing or feeling, but it entreth in at the ear, and so sinketh down to the heart: therefore, He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith: and consider that God gave the ear, that men should profit by hearing, even as he bestowed his Talents, that the factours should gain and profit by them. We are Gods factours, and our members are his Talents: the eye is a Talent, the tongue is a Talent, and the ear is a Talent. For this benefit a Christian hath, that the righteous Mammon is profitable, though the unrighteous be not: for whereas the men of the world have no health but in their Chests or Barnes, the righteous carry

theirs about them in their soules and bodies; for every member is a talent, which being faithfully and wisely imployed, there is a Treasure laid up for the soul in Heaven, but being not imployed, there is a day of reckoning, when every man according to the talent of grace bestowed on him, shall be bound to yeeld an account of his stewardship, even of our eyes, our tongues and eares, whereof we make so slender a reckoning. At that time it will small y avail us to say, I imployed mine eares to earthly uses; for then it will be said to us as to him that buried his Talent in the earth, Go take him and binde him hand and foot; then shall those hands be chained with fetters, which by example of their painfulnesse, refused to glorifie God; then shall those eyes be affrighted with horrible and gastly Visions, which in the Creatures would never behold the glory of God; then shal that tongue be tormented with unquenchable flames, which never sought to set forth the praise of God; and then shal those eares be filled with yelling, and howling, and gnashing of teeth, which never regarded to hear the Word of God; therefore whosoever he be to whom

God

God hath given us an ear, let him hear.

But what is that which Christ saith; He that hath an ear to hear; as if there were an Ear which were not to hear; we are to understand it as a note of spectall difference, for though we have all eares, yet all have not eares to hear: but as there is a kinde of idle or Idol Pastors, which have mouthes and speak not; so there is a kinde of idle hearers, which have eares and hear not, which sit in their seates as Images in the glasse windowes, bending their knées, lifting up their hands, and casting up their eyes; yet after so many yeares, and so many Masses, had never the honesty to give one Amen: onely that difference there is, that whereas the Saints in the glasse-windowes kéep out the winde, these fruitlesse hearers possesse the places wherein they do no good at all; and let it not seem strange that there should be eares which are not to hear, for Paul saith to the Iewes, that God hath given them a spirit of slumbering eyes that they should not see, and eares that they should not hear: because they had the instrument, but wanted the right use, for onely those may be

Rom. 11. 2.

ſaid to haue eares to hear, which firſt by our ſelues are vowed, and then after by the Spirit of God are ſanctified to that holy uſe: ſo that Chriſt ſpeakes eſpecially of the children of the Church, for they only haue ſanctified and prepared eares. This therefore (beloued) is that we deſire to learne, how to prepare and prouide our ſelues, that we may bring eares to hear, and hear with profit, leſt we depart from the Church, as the fiue foolish Virgins from the gates of heauen: as good not come, as come for no good. Therefore the firſt thing I am to exhort you to, is, that we may come together: for though priuate prayer is not unprofitable, and familiar exhortation wants not his uſe, yet our meeting together hath a ſpeciall bleſſing promiſed to it by him which ſaid, Where two or three are gathered together in my Name, there am I in the midſt of them: and indeed our hearing preſuppoſeth comming, for we cannot hear together except we come together, therefore David ſet comming firſt, and hearing after, and ſaid, Come children and hearken, and I will teach you the fear of the Lord. So ſay I unto you, firſt come, and then hearken, let

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it be with you as with David, who rejoyced when they said, Come, let us go into the house of the Lord, because one day in Gods Court is better than a thousand elsewhere. And who had not rather be a doore-keeper in the house of God, than to dwell in the tabernacle of wickednesse? Psal. 121.13.

Consider, what spirit was in David, when he said, that the sparrow and swallow were blest, because they might lodge their young so neer the Altar: as if a poore bird were to be envied for her nest, or rather to teach men that they ought to presse as hard to touch but the walles of the temple, as she that desired to touch but the hemme of Christs garment: and that if any should say; Come, let us go into the house of the Lord. Men ought to be as the Curtaines of the Tabernacle, whereof but one being drawn, all the rest did follow after. The Centurion boasted that he had such Servants, as if he said to one, Come, he comes, and yet he called them for his own private profit: but God a greater Master than the Centurion, saith Come, yea calleth us for our profit, and yet we come not. Nay, every creeping worme will put us to shame and condemne

us; for God spake but the word, and the Grashoppes came, yea and Caterpillers innumerable; but God hath spoken to us many words, and yet our number (God knoweth) is numerable enough. There is a kinde of Caterpillers that come to the Church, sacrilegious vermine, devouring holy things, which live by the sweat that they sweat not for; but they come unsent for, for God never spake to them, neither do I commend their diligence in comming; for a blessed thing it were if God would send a West-winde to blow them into the sea. But I speak of those poor Creatures whom God never calleth, but they come and are obedient, and their obedience ascendeth up to Heaven, and from Heaven is descended backe again to condemne our disobedience; for from Heaven God spake it, that the Ore could come to his owner, and the Asse to his Masters cribbe, but Israel Gods own people would not understand, nor come. O therefore, all ye that are Gods people, come and hearken, and take this Lesson withall that ye yeld not to come as Peter yelded to forgive his brother seven times and then had done; for I say unto you not

seven

seven times, but seventy times seven times, yea so often as the seventh day shall come upon you, come and hallow it. The Athenians came to hear Paul, but it was for novelty of his Doctrine; as there be (I am in doubt and I fear it) in this place who are come to hear the Sermon, onely because it is new and strange to have a Preacher; but when Preaching shall war stale, they will not hear the voyce of the charmer, charme he never so wisely. These men for a brunt are very devout, as he who received the Word in stony ground, rejoycing at the first, and hearing it with joy, but that joy indured but a while; for his zeal possessed him like an ague, very hot for the time, but when the fit was over, he fell to his old byas, as the Dog to his vomit. Remember David saith, Blessed are they that dwell in Gods house. The Church of God is not like an Inne, for once or twice to sojourne in, but it is to dwell in, and dwelling is a continuall abiding, we must have our hearts there, our treasure there, bring our children there, as the Swallow layes her young by the Altar; in a word, we must altogether dwell there, that whensoever

Christ shall come, he may finde us in the Temple, and not in a Taverne, in the house of Prayer, and not in a denne of theeves. We need not say (Beloved) as Peter said, Let us make us three Tabernacles, for God hath built us a Temple and Tabernacle to our hands: onely let us bring ready affections and say, *Bonum est esse hic*, It is good for us to be here, which if with assiduity and diligence ye shall performe, then will I say of you as David of himselfe, The zeal of Gods house hath eaten me up: but if ye faint and waxe cold, I must say that you have eaten up your zeal: therefore in the Name of God let us come with diligence. Gods liberality calleth for diligence at your hands, who of all the trees in Paradise did aske for himselfe but one, of all the dayes of seven asketh ye but one; if ye will give him another, he will accept it as a free-will offering.

Psal. 69.9.

But fail not to give him one, and pay it faithfully, who of his own doth aske ye one so sparingly. I know not what will be your excuses, ye have married a wife, or bought a yoak of Oxen, therefore ye cannot come. But deceive not your selves

ſelves, for theſe are no excuſes: ſhall a wife keep you backe from following Chriſt? yet better it were for a man to live alone, than to have ſuch an helpe. What though Adam ſaid, Man ſhall forſake father and mother to cleave to his wife? yet Chriſt ſaid, A man muſt hate father, mother, and wife, to come to him. But yee will plead that ye have bought a yoke of Oxen: *Poſtponetur Deus bovibus, qui nos æquavit Angelis*, ſaith an old Writer, Will you ſet God behinde your oxen, who hath made you equal with Angels? Gen. 24. Luke 14. 26.

Theſe things are good, but in their order and due place, but ſeek yee firſt the kingdom of God and the righteouſneſſe thereof, and then let wives and oxen follow after. For even our neceſſary buſines and lawfull affaires, if they hinder us from Gods ſervice, are turned into ſin, even as the pure waters in Egypt were turned into blood. If lawfull buſineſſes may not hinder our comming to the Church of God, then much leſſe may idle ſports and unlawfull games detain us: if bargaining and wiving may not excuſe us, much leſſe will piping and dancing. The Sabbath is a day of holy reſt, not of unholy riot:

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riot:

riot; the Iſraelites might not gather their Manna upon it, and may we ran a rioting upon it? What would they do to them whom they finde prophaning Gods Sabbath with drunken delights, who ſtoned him to death whom they found gathering ſtickes for needfull uſe? But this is our corruption of nature, every idle ſport provokes us to ſacrilege, to rob God of his glory in his Sabbath, and ſacrifice it to the Devill, *Diabolus te vocat & venis: Mundus te vocat, & venis: Caro te vocat, & venis: Cultus Dei vocat, & non venis*, ſaith an ancient Father, The Devill calleth by temptation, and ye yæld unto it; the world calleth, and ye liſten to it; the fleſh calleth, and ye come to it; but the Worſhip of God calleth, and ye care not for it.

Diogenes to try the nature of the Athenians, diſguiſed himſelfe unhandſomely, danced rudely, and ſet his voyce to ſing ill-favouredly, & the people came flocking about him; Behold (ſaith he) the nature of this people, ſo oft as I tok upon me to ſpeak of an honeſt life or vertuous converſation, they paſſed by me as a viſited perſon, and let me alone, but now I frame

my

my ſelfe to make ſport like a fool, they, like a flocke of foules come preſſing about me. There is nothing that chokes mens zeal ſo much, as that they hunt ſo greedily after the vanities of the world, neither was there any reaſon why Eſau was prophane, but becauſe he was a man of the field; for while he was hunting for veniſon abroad, Jacob catcht up the bleſſings and birth-right at home; even as oftentimes it falleth out, that while Gods bleſſing is a dealing in the Church, the people are revelling and rioting in the ſtreet; therefore come to the Church, and God will bleſſe you.

When you have obtained of your ſelves to come, the next thing is to performe attention: for David ſaith not, Come children and hear, but come and hearken; and if hearing were enough to ſatisfie a Sabbath day, then might you drive in your Oxen too, for they can apprehend an outward ſound as well as we; but though they have eares, yet they have not eares to hear. In the Scripture, hearing and hearkening is all one, and our hearing is *Opus animi non auris*, (as one ſaith) a worke of the minde, and of the outward

Ear,

ear, a diligent obſerving in the minde of that which is ſaid. Therefore the Grammarians do fitly ſignifie Attention under the word, (*Animadvertere*) *vt animum adverteremus, non aurem*; that we ſhould not onely turne our eares, but ſet our minde to it; but that can a beaſt never do, becauſe he hath no minde; and he that bringeth his eares to Church, and leaveth his minde at home, he commeth like a beaſt.

The enemies to attention.

Our attention hath five great enemies, the firſt is a ſtraying thought, when all the powers of the Soul ſhould wait upon the voyce of the Preacher, then are our mindes in our Coffers, or in our Paſtures, or where they ſhould not be, wherefore pray for a ſteady and ſtayed heart. The ſecond is a wandring eye, gazing after every picture, upon every mote or flie, and rowling up and down in every corner; for as Solomon ſaith, The eyes of a fool are in every corner, but a wiſe mans eyes are in his head. The third is a needleſſe ſhifting and ſtirring of the body, a fumbling with the hands, and a ſhuffling with the feet, a riſing and removing from place to place, when there is no cauſe to provoke us: and let it not ſeem ſtrange

that

that these small trifles should hinder our attention, for even the little birds of the air do picke up the seed of the Word, lest it should take root and go down to the heart. The fourth is an unreverent talking, and uncivil laughing in the Church, as if the Temple of God were a place of mart and exchange, where every man might single out his companion, and freely discourse of every matter and occasion offered and ministred; these are they that make the Temple of God a den of theeves. The fift is a secure and senslesse sleeping; for some there be who are no sooner in their seates, but their hearts are aslæp, as if they came to see Visions, and lyked with Jacob to see the Angels going up, when as they might as well see Eutichus falling downe; therefore quicken you senses, rouze up your dulnesse, and remember him which said to his Disciples, Could ye not watch with me one hour? To these five ye may adde (if ye please) a sixth, which of all the rest is most scandalous and offensive, and that is a shamefull departing out of the Church, and violent breaking from the Congregation; wherein a man doth as it were openly protest that he is exceeding

Acts 20.9.

Matth. 20.40.

ding weary, and hath not too much for his money; so that Joseph was never more willing to depart out of prison, than he out of the Church, nor Simeon better content to die, when he said, Lord now letteſt thou thy ſervant depart in peace. But ſuch men can hardly depart in peace, for ſeldome it is, when they leave nothing behinde them but the Grace of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, and the peace of God which paſſeth all underſtanding.

After attention, is required remembrance, to lay it up in the ſtore-houſe of our memory; for what availeth it to be attentive for the time, and ſo ſoon as we be gone to forget all, and ſuffer Birds to picke up the ſeed which Chriſt had ſown before? Saint James compareth ſuch a man to one beholding his face in a glaſſe, who goeth his way, and forgetteth immediately what manner of man he was; and fitly are ſuch eares reſembled to a Sive, which while you dipt in the water, receiveth it in a thouſand holes; but take it up, and the water runneth out faſter than ever it came in, ſo it is with forgetfull hearers, they marke attentively, conceive preſently, and for a time are touched inwardly,

James 1.23,

wardly, but the next toy driveth all out a-
gain, but Bleſſed are they that hear the Luke
Word of God and keep it: It ſhould 11.28.
ſæm that Peter carried ſuch a Sive in his
head, elſe how could the Devill ſift him as
Wheat? for no ſoner had Chriſt fore-
warned him that he ſhould foreſwear him,
but the Devil ſifted that word out of his
eares, and he forgat it, and his not remem-
bring the word, was the cauſe of Peters
apoſtaſie; for ſo ſon as he remembred the
words, the text ſaith, he went out and
wept bitterly; therefore let us not onely
hear, but remember to, for that Spirit
which ſaith, O my people hear my Law, Pſal.78.1.
it ſaith likewiſe, My ſon forget not my Prov.3.1.
Law. Therefore God preſcribed helpes of
memory to the Iſraelites, commanding
them to binde his words upon their hands
for a ſigne, that they ſhould be as frontlets
between their eyes, that they ſhould write
them upon the poſts of their houſes, and
on their gates; and in a word, that they
ſhould uſe all helpes againſt forgetfulnes,
for that was Gods meaning and no more;
and if we ſæk for an helpe indæd, then
conference is the helpe, when a man is
delighted to talke that at home which
hath

hath bẽn ſpoken of at the Church; for it may be that will pierce into the head at a ſecond repeating, which at the firſt repoꝛt would not; even as a nail may be dꝛiven in at a ſecond oꝛ third ſtroke, which could not at the firſt. And indeed it is Gods Commandment to the Iſraelites, that they ſhould talke of his Law among their childꝛen, when they were in their houſes, when they talked oꝛ elſe walked by the way, as alſo at their upriſing, and downlying; thereforꝛe let us thinke that this charge concerneth us likewiſe, and ſay with David, Our tongue ſhall talke of thy righteouſneſſe all the day long; that at whatſoever time Chꝛiſt ſhall come, he may finde us talking of his Teſtimonies; as when he overtook his Diſciples walking to Emaus, he found them communing of his death and paſſion. After attention and memoꝛy, the laſt and chief point is to lay it to the heart; foꝛ God eſpecially reſpecteth the heart, and if that be wanting, he miſſeth it at the firſt, and ſaith, This people honoureth me with their lippes, or with their eares, but their heart is far from me. It is a ſmall thing to remember onely what was ſaid, it is but a ſigne of a good

Pſal. 72.14.

Iſai 29.15.

memoꝛy

memory at the best; and if that be sufficient, then let the Devil come into the Temple too, for he hath memory more than enough, to quote any Scripture against Christ, or whosoever shall encounter him; and many Hypocrites which hang upon the Church have a certain swimming in their brain, a speculative Divinity, by which they can hold talke at a table to discourse of any point of Religion, or course out a controversie to the prof. But God is not served with wit and memory, therefore he saith further, Thou shalt lay up these words in thine heart and thy soul. *Matth. 4.* To lay Gods Word to the heart, is to take hold of it by the heart, and apply it to the conscience; as when we hear of Gods mercy, to be ravisht with joy, and when we hear of his judgements to be stricken with fear, when we hear of his promises, to rise up in hope; when we hear of our sinnes, to repent and loathe our selves. This is the laying of the Word to our heart, and this did Mary when she heard what strange things the Shepheards reported from the Angels, Saint Luke saith, She kept all those sayings and pondered them in her heart. *Luke 2.20,* A speciall helpe to this

is an often revolving and meditating in our mindes of that we have heard, for David did not onely talke of Gods testimonies amongst his friends, but being alone likewise did meditate of his Law, for so he saith, that in Gods Law was his continuall meditation, and that both evening and morning, and seven times in a day, and it hath been the practise of Gods Saints from time to time to enter into continuall meditation of his mercy, and of his judgement. It is commended in Isaac, that every evening he went out to meditate. In the Law, those beasts were onely clean which chewed the cud, by which was figured a Spirituall meditating and ruminating of Heavenly things, and it is the cause of much uncleanneſſe in mens lives, and of much judgement upon the world, because they meditate not of Gods wayes. Indeed saith the Prophet, The Harpe and Viole, the Timbrell and Pipe, and wine are in their Bankets: but the workes of God they consider not: therefore hell hath enlarged it selfe and opened her mouth, and they that rejoyced shall go down into it: and so saith the Prophet Jeremy, That the whole Land

Genes. 24.13.

is

is fallen into desolation, because there is none that considereth in his heart. Therefore in the Name of God (Beloved) let us prepare our eares and hearts, that we may first hear, then remember, and last of all, lay the words in our hearts, for this is the right hearing; and he that heareth hath not onely eares, but eares to hear; I would ye did consider, that every man by his obedience in this regard is judged of what flocke he is: for so saith Christ, My sheep hear my voyce: so that if a man be desirous to hear, then strait he is judged to be of Christs flocke; but if the word be unsavoury, and bred no delight in his heart, it is a shrewd presumption that that man is a Goat. And great reason we have to delight in Gods voyce, for there is no word proceeding out of his mouth, but it savoureth of mercy and salvation to the soul, for so the Church testified of Christ, that his lips are like to Lillies, dropping down pure myrrhe; and how then should God indure our contempt who prefer the Devill before Him? Nay, God will invite us not onely of contempt, but mockery too; for if we shall beseech God to supply the meanes of hearing, and

John 10.27.

Cant. 5.13.

ſend down a Prophet amongſt us, and when that Prophet commeth, ſhall ſhut our eares againſt Him, what is that but a mocke? Beſides, what an unreaſonable thing is it, that we deſire God to hear us, who could never vouchſafe to hear Him? if we ſtand in any need of God, how clamorous are we and importunate upon Him. Hear my prayer, O Lord, bow down thine ear unto my ſupplication; and why hideſt thou thy face and forgetteſt all our afflictions? and if God ſeem a little to delay us, how haſty are we upon Him? Come Lord Jeſus, come quickly, and make no long tarrying, my God; and O God make haſte to helpe us; but when God ſpeakes to us, there is none that turneth his ear, as if we had him in a ſtring, that He were bound to us, and not we to Him. Therefore it ſhall come to paſſe, that we ſhall pray and He ſhall not hear us, for ſo He threatneth. Becauſe I have called and ye refuſed, I will alſo laugh at your deſtruction, and mocke when your fear commeth, when your fear commeth like a ſudden deſolation, and your deſtruction like a whirl-winde, when affliction and anguiſh ſhall come upon

Prov. 7.24. 28,29,&c

upon you, then ſhall they call upon me, but I will not anſwer, they ſhall ſeek me early, but they ſhall not finde me, becauſe they hated knowledge. God ſhall take from you either the preaching of the Word, as he threatneth by Amos, I will ſend famine into the Land, not a famine of bread, nor thirſt for water, but of hearing the Word of the Lord. Or God ſhall take from you the Preacher of the Word, when ye ſhall run from coaſt to coaſt and ſhall finde none to preach peace unto your conſciences, or at the leaſt God ſhall take away the gifts of the Preacher, becauſe of the hardneſſe of your hearts. It is a notable obſervation of Saint Gregory, that God doth ſometime multiply his gifts and his Spirit upon the Preacher, becauſe the Hearer is deſirous to learne: and ſometime again he doth take away his gifts and his Spirit from the Preacher, even for a plague and judgement upon the people, becauſe they neither deſire to hear, nor care to learne. Therefore do ye prepare your hearts and eares to hear, and I doubt not but God will multiply his Spirit, and ſend a bleſſing upon theſe my labours. And of this let me adviſe you before hand, that no one of you Amos 18.1.

at any time presume to set his foot within these walles, who first setteth not down with himselfe to practise in his life what here he heareth with his eares: some come not to have their lives reformed, but to have their eares tickled, even as at a play; some come for novelty, some for fashion, some to sleep, some to see, and some to be seen, but few to practise: but let these things be far from you, for our Saviour Christ saith, He that is of God, heareth Gods Word: nay, he goeth further in the same place, speaking to the unbeleeving Jewes, Yee therefore heare them not, because yee are not of God: and Saint James saith, that hee deceiveth himselfe who is onely a hearer of the Word and not a doer; for Gods Word is a Leaven, whose nature is to turne the whole lumpe into his own nature, to season and make it like it selfe, as when you have heard a Sermon of humility, to shew forth the fruit of that Sermon in your lives and conversations: when you have heard a Sermon of repentance, to be stricken in heart with a feeling of our sinnes: when you have heard of Gods judgements against blasphemy, covetousnesse, lying, stealing,

John 8.47.

James 1.22.

ſtealing, uſury, or prophaning of the Sabbath, every man to ſet down with himſelfe, I will ſurely (with Gods helpe) purge my ſelfe of this and that corruption, and amend in my ſelfe what I now ſee is amiſſe: then may we ſay of you, ye are our Sermon, as Paul ſaid to the Corinthians, Ye are our Epiſtle, when whatſoever Doctrine hath flowed out of our mouthes, doth ſpring up as freſhly in your lives. Let us therefore ſay with David, O Lord prepare the hearts of this people unto thee, ſend down thy holy Spirit into our hearts and eares, governe us when we come to hear: for Paul may plant, and Apollo water, but thou muſt give increaſe, and in vain ſhall the voyce of the Preacher beat upon the dore of our eares, unles thou fill our hearts with thy Spirit; which we beſeech thee of thy infinite mercy and goodneſſe to performe, that we may proceed from grace to grace, untill we come to the ſtate of glory, unto which the Lord of his mercy bring us; to whom with the Son and the holy Ghoſt, (three Perſons, but one God) be aſcribed all praiſe, dominion, and glory, now and for evermore. Amen. 2 Cor. 2. 3.

FINIS.